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ABSTRACT

Ricky is an 11-year-old migrant worker. During the summer, he travels with his family from their home in Rio Grande City, Texas, to farms farther north. There they spend 10-12 hours a day in the hot sun picking fruit and vegetables and packing the harvest for market. Ricky is not protected by the federal laws that govern the hours, wages, and working conditions of others. At age 11, he can work legally for more than 40 hours a week, even during the school year. He may pick produce in places where he is exposed to dangerous chemicals and pesticides. Despite the hardships of manual labor, Ricky feels fortunate. His father has a steady job in Chicago during the winter months and sends money home so that his family can stay in Rio Grande City during the school year. Ricky attends Ringgold Elementary School, where the principal, Chon Garza, believes that if children are educated, their dreams of a better life can come true. Included are a profile of Cesar Chavez (1927-1993), a migrant who organized the first union for agricultural workers; profiles of other young migrant workers in fifth and sixth grade; facts about children who work as migrants and about the United Farm Workers of America; many photographs; a glossary; and an index. (Author/TD)

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